

Town Meeting Address

Delivered by Erica Kohl
Clean Energy and Sustainability Committee
Annual Town Meeting held June 12, 2021

Thank-you, Madam Moderator. And thank-you, Westford, for capturing your vision of a cleaner, greener future for us and for our kids in a Town Meeting resolution last October. I am here today to let you know that Westford's Leaders acted on your direction; I'm here to update you on progress made against that resolution, and to let you know how you can stay informed of progress towards its goals or even be involved in that progress, if you choose.

First a reminder of what Town Meeting directed. Last October's resolution called for the promotion of clean energy, efficiency upgrades to buildings throughout Westford, renewable energy in town contracts where feasible, a task force to define strategies for achieving Net-Zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, and briefings to the Select Board and to you, Town Meeting. In response, the Select Board established the Clean Energy and Sustainability Committee and charged it with developing Westford's Roadmap to Net-Zero.

The Roadmap subcommittee within this Committee has completed an initial Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory and created the framework for a Net-zero Roadmap, which will consider ways to address Building emissions, Energy acquisition, Natural Resources Management, and Citizen Behaviors that affect Greenhouse Gas emissions. In addition, Westford has seen some recent successes. Among these are the application for and receipt of grants for EV charging stations in town, the application for a Grant to establish a tree inventory and to protect environmental resources that sequester carbon, and the increased use of Clean Energy in town through the *Power Options Program*, which has provided all of us the option to easily green up our home electricity to come from an additional 50% or even 100% renewable sources for a few additional pennies per kWh.

These successes cannot be attributed to the Committee alone and the distinction of shared success is critical. The successes I just mentioned were driven by citizens both on and off the committee and by collaboration between organizations both inside and outside of town government. In the future the Committee will recommend methods for Westford to increase both its use of renewable energy and its efficiency in using that energy, but the implementation of those recommendations must involve understanding and buy-in from you, Westford's residents and leaders, both public and private. We will seek to understand your perspectives and to craft a roadmap that reflects those perspectives.

If you'd like to stay informed on, or become involved with, addressing the goals of last October's Town Meeting resolution, please visit the Website for the Clean Energy and Sustainability Committee off of the Town's website or the roadmap subcommittee's site at tinyurl.com/netzerowestford. You may also watch the meetings every other Monday night, or visit our table at a community outreach event. We look forward to working with you and hearing from you as we create this path to a net-zero future for Westford. Thank-you.